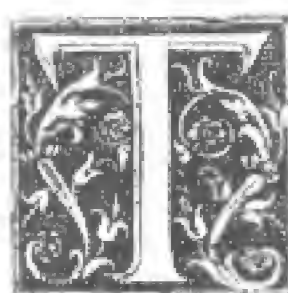


your mynde. The waye that you haue entred, is the very right true waye vnto saluation. Thus ferre you haue proceeded forwarde by the goodnes of God. Continue still stedfastly throughe his helppage ayde, till you attayne vnto the victorious rewarde of lyfe that neuer shall dye. The congregation of the christians commende them vnto you, even the congregation whome God hath cholen out to himselfe together with you in Babilon, whiche in the myddes of wicked ydolatrours folowe the godlynes of the gospel, and in myddes of most fylthy corrupte livers embrace the purities of cleane conuersacion. You are not alone by your selues, God hath his electe in every place: In dede those are but a very fewe, howbeit they are a synclie tryed seede to encrease the congregation in tyme comynge more largely. Marke saluteth you, whiche is to me as it were my sonne. Salute you every one other with a kysse, not after the sorte that is gene more custumely than hartely, but with an holy, pure, a true christia mynde, which is not doone against the hearte, but is the signe of a chaste and a pure vpright loue, and not a lyeng countrefaite token. And (to make an ende of myne Epistle in lyke sorte as I beganne it) Grace and peace be alwayes present with you al, which beyng engrafted vnto the bodye of Iesu Christ, lyue by his spirite, that grace maye couple you vnto God, and peace maye glewe you together with mutual con corde: whiche thing God (that is best and most myghty) bypunge to passe. Amen.

Thus endeth the paraphrase vpon the
first Epistle of S. Peter
thapostle.

The argument vpon the later Epistle of S. Peter thapostle/ by D. Erasmus of Ro- terodame.



This Epistle/as it appeareth/ Peter wrote/ whan he was greatly growe in age, and almost at the pites bynke, for in dede he maketh mention of his death. He wyteth generallie to all sortes of christians, exhortinge them to purities of lyfe, and by aunient examples and with the tectout of the laste iudgemēt frayeng them from fylthynges: and he doeth vehemently blame them, whiche corrupte the myndes of the symple with peruerse doctrine, in denyng the comynge of Christ.

Thus endeth the Argument.

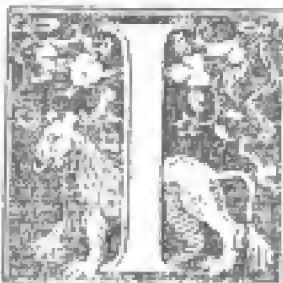
The paraphrase of Erasmus

vpon the later Epistle of S. Peter the apostle.

The first Chapter.

The text.

¶ Simon Peter, a frend and an Apostle of Iesus Christ, to them whiche haue obtained the precious faith with vs thoro the righteousness of our God and saviour Iesus Christ. Grace be vnto you, and peace be multiplied thoro the knowledge of God and of Iesus our Lord. Accordeinge as his godly power hath geuen vnto vs al thynges that pertaine vnto lyfe and godlynesse, thoro the knowledge of him that hath called vs by gloire and vertue, by the which are geue vnto vs, excellent and most great promyses, that by the merites thereof ye might be partakers of the godly nature, if ye kepe the corruption of worldly luste.



Simon Peter / in tymes passe a diligent follower of Moyses law, and now a seruant and Embassadour of Iesus Christ, whose gospel (eue as þ day light) wipeth and dyeth awaye all the shadowes of the olde testament, write vnto all maner of men without parciall exception either of people, or religiõ, either of kinde, or state, or yet conditiõ. For we esteeme all people to be kynnsfolkes and most nere lyfyned vnto vs, wholoether haue deserted to be made like vnto vs in the professiõ of the faith of the gospel by the which, we haue attayned true righteousness, not by circumcision, or by sacrificies of the lawe, but by the goodnes of our God, and by the deathe of our saviour Iesu Christ, who hath frely pardoned vs our olde synnes, to thintent we should hence forth folowe gospellyke righteousness, which dooeth not consist in ceremonies, but in true goodlines of mynde: a hath a certayne sorte greater perfectiõ than the Jewes righteousness, whiche is nothyng but a shadowe of true righteousness. And I praye, þ lyke as you haue yet hitherto gon abouneandly forwarde in the grace of þ gospel, alwayes somewhat augmentyng in the exercises of goodnes, a drawyng nere brotherly conorde amonge your selues darre more and more: so the liberrall goodnes of God woulde vouchsafe to make persite his graces in you: which Jewelles encrease so much þ more largely in you, as you grow forwarde into þ knowledge of God þ father, a of his loue our Lord Iesu Christ, the acknowledgyng of whome is eternall lyfe. For it is the chiefe poynt of saluatiõ, to acknowledge the autho: of saluatiõ, that we chalenge no parte thereof to our owne desertes and strengthes, or to the prestipciõs of Moyses lawe, inasmuche as whatsoever is pertainyng to true lyfe, and whatsoever belongeth vnto true godlynes, his diuine power hath bestowed it vnto vs, without helpe of circumcision, onely by faith, wherby we acknowlage God the father, from whome procede all thynges, and Iesus Christ, by whome onely we haue al thynges geuen vnto vs. These thynges are not geuen throughe our merites, but by his free bounteous gyfte, whiche of his owne accorde hath called vs vnto the benefite of saluatiõ: and to them that were voyde of gloire and vertue, he hath bestowed bothe his owne gloire and vertue: to thintent that wheras being aduerse vnto our olde vicious naughtines, lyke fylthy vile slaues we serued ydoles, we shoulde be engrafted vnto Christe, and be made bothe pure and glorious

rious, hauing þ wickednes taken out of the waye, wherein we were fylthily sope-
led. He hath translated our vyle naughtines vpon himselfe, that he mighte
choose vs of his owne free pleasure into þ fellowship of his glory: Our trespass-
ses he hath taken vpon himselfe, that we might enioye his innocencie. Nowe
these same are very great matters, but those are farre greater of a muche more
excellencie, that are promysed vs in tyme to come, not by the lawe of Moyses, as
we haue often sayed before, but by thacknowlaging of Iesu Chyist. But what
is it, that is promysed? Forsoothe that albeit you pesterne not to the keptedde
of the Jewes, yet you maye be made w them companions of the diuine nature
beyng chosen into the number of þ chyldren of god, to possesse thenheritance, of
immortal lyfe, so that you set your study vpon a certaine immortallite by vncor-
rupte conuersation in the meane season here in this worlde, and flee from al cor-
ruption of vices and naughtie lustes wherewith a mynde that is infected, redeth
to euertlastinge deathe.

¶ And herunto geue all diligence: in your faithe minisster vertue: in vertue knowledg: in
knowledg temperaunce, in temperaunce patience: in patience godlynesse: in godlynesse
brotherly kyndnesse: in brotherly kyndnesse loue. For yf these thinges be amonge you, and
be pleneous, they will make you that neither shalbe pole nor vnfayfull in the hope
of our lorde Iesus Chyist. But he that lacketh these thinges, is blynde and gropeth
for the waye with his hande, and hath forgotten þ he was purged from his olde synnes.

¶ The nexte.

God hath once given innocencie frely, and it is not enoughe to mainteine
it, but applyng withall studious diligence, endeuour your selues to be made
riche in well doinges, that your faithe be not vyle, but that it be accompanied
with good behauiour, that nothing be doone or sayed, but that whiche is ver-
tuons. Than let good behauiour entreteyne knowlage, that you maye not one-
ly folowe the thinges that be byght, but also discerne, what thinge, in what
place, amonge whome, after what soyte, and by what meanes ought worthilye
to be done. Let knowledg be accompanied with temperaunce, that the mynde
beringe vniuersally strong against all the wanton enticementes of the worlde,
maye constantlye without shynkyng folowe the thing, that it hath iudged
to be best. Vnto temperaunce let patience be ioyned, that when you doe wel, you
maye cheerefully suffer sorowes. For those men, whom the flatering pleasures
of the worlde doe not bringe in to a fine singred nicenes, are contrarye broken
with impacient suffring of sorowes, with patience let godlynes be present, that
what sorowes you doe or suffre, you referte it to the glorye of God. Let godlynes
be accompanied with brotherly charitie, that like as you loue God for himselfe,
euen so for his sake you maye loue all them that professe God. And let brother-
ly charitie be augmented and vphaped with loue, to studye to doe good for all
men, not onely them that are godly and Chyristian folkes, but also for them that
are wicked. These are the frutes of an euangelicall faith, whiche yf you haue
them abundantlye, shall byng to passe, that where you haue acknowledged
our lorde Iesu Chyist throughe the faith, it should not be vnproffitable and vn-
frutefull vnto you, althoughe you haue nothing to doe with circumcision. For
in these thinges consisteth the whole summe of Chyristen godlynes: and yf any
mā want the, he hath professed Chyist in vaine, forasmuche as he stybeth backe
from the light of the Gospell in to his olde former darkenes, euen as it were a
blonde man that groapeth the waye with his hande, and is caried aboute here-
awaye and therawaye throughe the mases of worldly lustes: neither seeth he

The Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the.ii. Epistle

the waye to come to the felowship of Christ, beynge vnthankfull also for the benefite of Christ, of whome where he is once frely cleued from his olde transgressions, yet as a man forgetfull of this so excedynge a mercede, he styedeth backe in to the same againe.

The text.

¶ Wherfore brethren, geue the more diligence for to make your callinge and election sure by good works. For if ye doe such things, ye shall neuer fall. Yea, and by this meane an entrance in shalbe ministred vnto you abundantly into the euertlasting kyngdome of our Lord and sauour Iesus Christ. Wherfore, I wil not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembraunce of such things, though ye knowe them your selues, and be stablished in the present tenech. Notwithstandynge I thinke it meete (as longe as I am in this tabernacle) to stirre you vp by putting you in remembraunce, for as muche as I am sure, that shortly I must put of this my tabernacle, euen as our Lord Iesus Christ shewed me. I wyll enee also geue my diligence, that ye maye haue wherewith to stirre vp the remembraunce of these things after my departinge.

And therfore, brethren, let it not make you to lyue in a securitie and to be careles in that the goodnes of God, hath (whan you deserued nothing) called you vnto the profession of the gospell, hauinge once pardoned all the synnes of your former lyfe: but endeouour your selues so muche the more, that the goodnes of God, wherewith he hath called you, wherewith he hath chosen you, be not turned to your destruction and heape of damnacion, in case beynge forgetful of his bounteous gentilles, you be tumbled backe in to y^e same state, from whence he ransomed you with his owne death. But procure rather with well doynge, that God seme not to haue called and chosen you in vaine. And seme parte of this mater lyeth euen in you. For if you consider, from whence God hath called you, to what things he hath called you, and what rewardes he hath set for the for you, and if you wyll pceace therunto by these meanes, whiche I haue declared a lytell befoze, you shall neuer syppe out of the right counse of godlynes. For if you pceace this waye, Goddes assistinge helpe shalbe plenteously present with you, and shal succour you with his riche releyse, that at length beynge conquerours of this woylde, you maye attayne to the euertlasting kyngdome of our Lorde and sauour Iesus Christ, to possesse with him the treasures of heauen, for whose sake you haue set naught by the treasures of y^e earth. The rewarde is excedynge great, but it must be procured with excedynge greates diligence. Wherfore I wyll neuer cease to geue you warnynge of these matters, althoughe I suppose it not necessaie, seynge you both doe and remembre, what you ought to doe: and are also confirmed nowe by longe processe of godlynes in the acquainted knowledge of the trueth a great while, whiche hauinge embraced, you constantlye folowe yet hitherto: notwithstanding to thintent you maye more and more watche styll in that you haue begonne, I recken it my parte, that remembre my lordes pcepte, whiche commanded me, y^e beynge conuerted my selfe, I shoulde confirme my brethren, as longe as I lyue among you (beynge a stranger vpon earth) in y^e tabernacle of this fleshy body. I shoulde stirre vp a prycke forwarde the studye of godlynes in you, and in dede so muche the more, because I knowe, I shall shortly be stripped out of the dwellynge of this fleshy bodye, and chaunge this exile of the earth for y^e franchised free citie of heauen. For our Lorde Iesus Christ signified so vnto me, whome I serue yet hitherto as a souldier in this tabernacle. Nowe therfore I shall geue diligence, that these matters maye in the meane space be so surely fixid in youre heartes

hertes with often admonicion, that you maye remembre them after my deathe, whan I can not warne you by worde of mouth. For seing the thinge is most certayne, that you haue receyued of vs, it behoueth you not to swaue from it.

¶ For we haue not folowed deccitfull fables, when we opened vnto you the power and commynge of our Lorde Iesu Christ: but with our eyes we sawe his maiestie: euen then verely when he receaued of God the fathers honour and glory, and when there came such a voyce to him from the excellent glorye. This is my deare beloued sonne, in whome I haue delyte. This voyce we hearde come from heauē, when we were with him in the holy mount. We haue also a right sure worde of prophetic, wherunto (yf ye take hede) as vnto a light that shyneth in a darcke place, ye do well vntill the daye dawne, and the day shal be cleare in your heares. So that ye first knowe this: that no prophete in the scripture hath any p̄uare interpretation. For the scripture came neuer by the will of man: but holy men of God speake, as they were moued by the holy ghoſt.

The text.

For our doctrine was not suche gayze, as the philosophers teache, whose dyſte is to perswade by craftylye conueyed fables, and humayne subtilties, the thing that they them selues vnderstande not, and dysagree also amonge them selues. But we haue in no wyſe folowed these wayes, in openynge vnto you the power and commynge of our Lorde Iesu Christ, and in preachynge vnto you his maiestie, whiche we haue sene with these eyes. For he vouchesafe to exhibite vnto certayne of his owne afore his deathe some special token, with what mightie power and with what glorye he shal once come, to iudge the quicke and the dead, and what wonderfull felicitie he shal geue vnto them, that loue him stedfastlye. For wher God the father endued him all wholly with glorye and honour, inſomuche that his countenaunce shone as bright as the sunne, and his clothes were more white than the snowe, so farre, that mannes eyes coulde not abyde to beholde the heauenly sight, and there came also an excedynge most honourable testimonie of the fathers voyce, whiche was brought downe from hygh vnto him from the glorious maiestie of God the father. And it was after this sort: This is my welbeloued sonne, whiche hath delighted my mynde, heare him. There coulde haue ben no witness geuen, eſther more fully or more excellent. And it was pronounced, not of any prophete, but of the fathers owne maiestie. These thinges we haue sene with our eyes, these haue we hearde with our eares, whan we were p̄sent with him in the holy mount Chabor. If so be that the prophetes playne oracles be in a great weighty estimation among you, which propheticd by figuratyue darke shadowes of Christ: of much more grauite ought so euident a declaracion by the father himselſe of his sonne be. The prophetes agree with the fathers voyce, yf a man doe rightly interpret them. They with their promyses prepare as it were mennes myndes to the trueth of his gospel, in that they shadowe and as it were couertly point out, the thing that the gospel dooth openly preache. Therfore I doe not disallowe, that the Jewes beynge vehementlye giuen to the prophetes prophetienges, seke there for the comynge of Messias. For it is a stepp somewhat vnto the saythe of the gospel, to beleue that Christ shoulde come. For a man shal the more soner beleue that Christ is come, yf he be perswaded that he shoulde come. Therfore there is good hope of him, that beynge not yet lightened with the light of the Gospel, is attentue vnto the prophetes, as to a candell appearynge in a darcke place. For it is better to haue some light than no light, till the sunne come, and the daye dawne, to dyspe awaye all darkenes, and to obscure euen that candle;

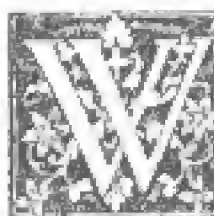
The Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the.ii. Epistle

bell, and that the daye sterre of gospell preachinge maye shyne bryght in your hartes, whiche declarerh that the sonne is at hande. The sayinges of the prophetes are to this vse profytable, yf they that reade them, consider that þe scripture of prophecyinge befoze hande is darkly hydden vnder couerte of figures, & can not be vnderstanden without interpretaciō. And þe is not euery mannes interpretacion, noz after euery mannes arbitrement. For the prophetes, whiche spake of thinges befoze hande, did not speake after their owne vyaine noz after the deuyse of their owne mynde, but where they were holy men and pure from al humane lustes, þe holy gost inspired their hartes, & vsing them as his instruments, he signified his mynde vnto vs by the accordingly. The thing þe men set forth by mannes deuyse, may be perceaued by mannes wytte. But þe thing þe is set forth by the inspiration of the holy gost, requirerh an interper, etour inspired with the lyke spirite. They that applye the thing, whiche is spoken of Chyriste, vnto any worldlyng king: they that drawe the thing that is spoken of the lyfe of heauen, vnto the felicitie of this worlde: they that interprete the thing that is spoken of the treasures of the mynde, of the commodities of this worlde: doe here faulre sweue from the misticall meaning of the prophecy. Eether are they easily perswaded that Chyrist is come, in that by faile interpretation of the prophecie, they imagine to them selues a certaine earthlye Messias, suche a one as he shewed not him selfe to be. And for that cause they acknowledge him not, not that he varyeth from the spirituall ymage of the prophete, but that he differeth from the ymagined ydole of falslyfeyned interpretation.

The.ii. Chapter,

The.iiij.

There were false prophetes also amonge the people, euen as there shalbe false teachers amonge you, whiche pryncely shall byng in damnable sectes (euen denyng the Lorde that hath bought them) and byng vpon them selues swyfte damnacion, and many shal folowe theie damnable wayes, by whome the waye of crueltie shalbe euyl spoken of, and thow we countourne shall they with fained wordes make machauntyc of you, whose iudgement is now not faulre of, and their damnacion theye p. not.



Whosoever he be, that prophesieth after thaffection of his owne mynde, is falsely named a prophete. Whosoever he be, that interpreteth the prophetes sayinge, vnto his owne couetous appetites, is a faile interperetour. There were in tymes past false prophetes euen amonge the Jewes, whiche eether to pyke a thanke at þe princes hande, or elles for bauntyge sake, or for hatred of other, prophecied the thinge, whiche the spirite of God spake not, but that they had in their assemblies imagined them selues. They countrefaicting their behauiour as though they had ben true prophetes, deceaued folyshe people, and reppned against the true prophetes with their lymges. And so after my deceasse also there shall arys suche, as shall falsely boaste them selues to be teachers of the gospell, where as they shall be nothinge elles but maisters of falscheade. They shall swarne from the doctrine of the gospell, and bynge in mennes gloses: in stede of the truth that byngeth saluaciō, they shall close in pernicious sectes, for their owne gayne, that pertaine rather to their owne glorye and their owne tyraunye, than vnto Chyristes afaire: and they shall goe on vntill into so great madnesse, that they shall not be afrayed vnkynde to denye euen their Lorde Iesus, by whose bloude they were redeemed, and whose name they

they once professed, and shall be more wicked than the very heathens, which neuer professed Christ. By the which their dooings they shall prouoke the vengeance of God vpon them selues, and it shall not onely nothinge auayle them, that they once professed Christ, but they shall also pull vpon them selues speedy destruction, God taking vengeance vpon them. Howbeit it were but a small matter, if none were lost, but onely they, which are already loste, but they shall also drawe many with them into destruction. For false doctrine teachers shall fynde disciples of their owne, and bearinge them selues boldly vpon the, they shall not be afrayed to rayle vpon the gospelles truth which you haue receaued of vs: nether shall they purely handle the worde of the gospel, because they see it maketh nothinge auayleably to their greedynes, but being bent vnto their owne priuate lucre they shall begyle your simple playnesse with feryned communication, not going about to wyne you vnto Christe, but to plucke to them selues the greatest gayne they can from you. For they see that the gospels doctrine is smally pleasaunt vnto them, which are cralled with the delices of this worlde, they see it is no myce delicate matter, to doe as wee doe, desende the spencerline of the gospels doctrine constantly against the wicked, through all deathes. Therefore shall they desyle the true doctrine of Christ: and in steede of it, they shall teache those thinges, that are pleasaunt to the grosse hearers rather than holsonie; and those thinges that purchase their substance and renowne in the worlde and not with God. For they shall couet rather for glorye and pleasure that shall last but a while, to purchase euerylastinge destruction bothe to them selues and to others, than through the hope to remeues of the body to thrust out vnto felicitie that neuer shall die. Beware you folow not those guides, excepte that you wyl goe streight waye into destruction. Nether let it deceaue you, in that they are alofte in hyghe estate in this worlde, in that they are riche, in that they lyue at their owne ease. They shall not long haue the fruition of this continuance of false felicitie. For lyke as the godly shall in a while receyue their rewardes, which God hath already decreed long agoe, euen so these mennes payne maketh speedy hast vnto them, nether doeth their destruction slepe that shall sodainly oppresse those that be careles and lyue in a securitie. They maye deceaue mennes iudgementes, but they can not begyle God. Howsoeuer men, ouer whome they haue auctoritie, doe forgene them, God, which is afrayed of no mans myght wyl not forgene them.

¶ For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them downe into hell, and delivered them into chaynes of darkness, to be punished, to be kept vnto iudgement: nether spared the olde world, but saved. For the right preacher of rightwysnes, and brought in the floude vpon the world of the vngodly, and turned the cities of sodom and Gomor into ashes: ouerthrew them, damned them, and made on them an ensample vnto those that after shoulde lyue vngodly. And iust Lot vexed with the vncleyn conuersation of the wicked, deliuered he. For he beinge righteous, and dwelling among them in seking and hearing, becom his righteous soule from dape to dape with their vniuersall vices. The Lord knoweth howe to deliuer the godly out of temptation, and to reserue the vncleyn vnto the dape of iudgement for to be punished: but chasty them that walke after the fleshe in the lust of vncleynnes, & despye auctoritie. Presumptuous are they, & stubborn, which teach not to speake euill of them that excell in worshippe. When the angels which are greater bothe in power and might, receaue not of the Lord raynyng iudgement against them selues. But these as brute bestes, naturally brought forth to be tamed and destroyed, speake euill of the thinges that they vnderstande not, and shall pearce in their awne destruction, and receaue the rewardes of unrightwysnes.

The text.

The Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .ii. Epistle

For why shoulde he spare them nowe, seying that in tynes past he spared not the very angels, whiche had offended, but threw them downe headlong out of heauen, bounde them with the chaines of theuerlastynge darke night, and caste them in to the pylson of hell, to be reserved to this ende, that hauing sentence of damnacion in the last iudgement, they may be committed to eternal torments for evermore: wyl he suffer payne to be vnpunished in men, whiche suffered it not in the angelles? Shall the thing be vnpunished in them, that they doe after the light of the gospell manifestly opened vnto them, & after so many bounteous benefites frely given vnto them by him, which spared not the olde world (being rude without knowledge) but being greued at mennes viciousnes, whan the world was vniuersally spotted with wicked maners, he brought the floude vpon it, and dispatched al mankynde, sauinge noe, who being the epght parson his wyl was to haue saued out of so mightie a great multitude of mortal men, because the relisue hauinge contemned the gentle sustenance of God, he onely in makynge the Arke testified, that he had the vengeance of the almighty. And wyl not he punyssh the people of these dayes, which with poysonyng downe a shewe of byrystone, brought so many cities, and so flourishinge a countrey of Sodom and Gomor into ashes, and matted them so vtterly, that there remaineth nothing, but an horrible and a pestilent stinkinge marrice, for a testimony what payne abyde they, whiche with lyke wickednes prouoke the wrath of God vpon them selues? And lyke as vnto them their owne wickednes was their owne destruction, euen so the innocencie of Lot turned to his saluacion: vnto whome whan the abominable felowes intended violence, and would with their abhominable raging lustes oppresse the chaste godly man, God pulled him out of the companye of the wicked, among whome it was the most greuous payne for him to lyue. For in asmuche as he was pure and chaste bothe in eyes and eares, it was a greuous torment for a godly disposed mynde, to heare daily, and see daily, the thinges that he abhorred withall his whole hearte.

By these it is sufficiently declared, that God neuer suffereth, any man to lose the rewarde of his innocencie, neither any mans wickednes to be vnpunished: although he gently beate w some for a season, & they might once repent: & though he suffer his owne sometime to be repented for a while, yet whā tyme is, he can dwyer the godly out of folowes: & contrariwise he can reserve & vngodly against the daye of the last iudgement to be punished with eternall tormentes for evermore. No kynde of vnrightheousnes shalbe suffered vnpunished. But those shall specially suffer paynes, whiche as it were distrustinge the promys of the gospell, folowe in this worlde, that whiche is delectable to the body, seruyngc fylthy outragious lustes, wherwith they desyle their whole lyfe on euery syde. And that they may be the more wicked, they double their wickednes with violence, & contume those that be set in publyke autozitie, beinge snarke hardye, and shameles, and are not ashamed to rayle vpon suche as are men of dignitie. And these thinges are wretched men, hardye to doe, where as the angelles beinge farre more excellent in power and strength, although they otherwys wicked yet they proceeded not into so muche shameles hardynes as to abyde to speake curll of God: and where as they in other matters neglected the wyl of God, yet in this point they were afrayed to offende him, and reided vnto thauzitie of god. But these men beinge more vngacions than the wicked spirites,

lyke

like brute bestes bovie to thys ende, that they maye bee catched and destroy-
ed, sozomuche as they are not afrayed to backbyte and mystepozte theyr
superiours: not knowing this in the meane while, for whose sake they speake
euyl of them. Like as they through theyr corrupte condicions procure destruc-
tion to them selues, even so shall they perre the like bestes, and receyue a wo-
rthy reward of theyr wicked life: sozomuche as they tken it a swete and ioy-
ful gape life, if they cast all shame quite away, and geue them selues in the open
daylyght vnto mythe, tyot, and filthye voluptuous lustes. For yet they haue
some shame remaynyng with them that doo these thynges in the night.

They count it pleasure to lyue delciously for a season. Spottes they are and tythpo-
nells, which lyue at pleasure in theyr awn deceptuable mayes, teasyng and scowpyng you
hauing eyes ful of adourcy, and that cannot cease from synne, begylng vnable soules. The text.
Hearres they haue exercised with cobbery. They are curled cytolon which haue loysaken
the eyght waye, and are gone astraye to lowyng the waye of Balaam the sonne of Bolor,
whiche leued the remarde of vncygarewesse: but was rebuked of hys iniquyte. The
same and hynne best, speaking with mans voyce forbad the madnesse of the prophete.

Who would beleue that these were menne: They are rather filthe and spot-
tes, who in their filthie glotonous bankettinges (wherin being wretchedly de-
creaced they repose the hole summe of felicitie) baunt against you, as though you
were madde menne, because you haue not the fruction of the commodities of
thys present life. And in the meane tyme riot prouoketh outragious luste, and
whan they are once wyne dronken, they haue bestly lusting eyes, nether haue
they mynde of any thing elles, than vpon whozemonging, and other kyndes of
wickednes. For they can not, whan they haue once cast awaye reason, whan they
haue ben once dronken with wyne, crasse from naughtye doing, but they skyppe
from wickednes to wickednes, so muche that it is not ynough for them to lyue
vngtaciouly them selues, except they intangle and allure other mens myndes
(not yet cotinued in vertue) vnto theyr filthynes. How perchaunce it were moze
tolerable, if they offended in nothyng but in riot and lecherous lust: But there
is no kynde of vice but they haue it. Like as they filthily make awaye that they
haue, even so filthily doo they proude to make prodigallyl awaye, haupng a
mynde and a wytt practised vnto couetousnes, vnto decraite and vnto rauine,
doing euery thing what so euer it be, for euantage sake: and for lucre curle the
good and the godly, and being corrupte with money swaue from the right
waye: and in that poynt resemble theyr father Balaam the sonne of Bolor, who,
whan he knewe what was best, yet being corrupt with wicked fee, he went about
to curle them, whom God was mercifull vnto: & couetousnes brought him into
so great a blyndnes, & he was rebuked of his asse, & where as he being a madde
doting mā had cast of his mans mynde, & brute beast speaking in a mans voyce
restrayned the prophetes madnes, seing moze wth het bodyly eyes than he saw wth
p^{er} eyes of his mynde because he was strikē blynd through couetousnes of money.

These are welles without water: cisternes that are carish with a tamped, to whom the
myst of barrennes is referred for tace. For when they haue spoken the greates swelling
wordes of vanity, they entyre theowle lustes in the voluptuousnes of the fleshe them, that
were cleane escaped: euen them that at now lyue in tredit: while they p^{er}mitte them liberte,
where as they themselves are the bounde seruautes of corruption. For of whom a man is
ouercome, vnto & same is he brought in bondage. For yf they (after they haue escaped f^{rom}
& tythynes of the world theowle & knowlege of & Lord & the sauiour Iesus Christe) are
yet tangled agayn therin, & overcomen, theris & latter ende wo:lle wth them the & beginning.
For it had bene better for the, not to haue knowen & way of rightewesnes, then after they
haue knowen it, to tume f^{rom} the halp & iudgement that was geuen vnto them. But the
same is hapened vnto them & is v^{er}dy to be spoken by the true prome. The dogge is ture
ned to his vomer agayn, & & sow & was wthch is tured agayn to yet tualoung in & m^{is}e.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .ii. Epistle

These are they that promysse a certayn wonderfull and newe doctrine, where as they bypnyng nothing worthy the profession of the Gospel, being like welles that lacke water, wherunto if a manne come athurst, he can fynde nothing but muddie and claye: and like vnto mysty cloudes, that are dyspue hither and thither with the flogme of wyndes, and scine as they would geue rayne vnto the thirstye grounde, where as for all that, not so much as one droppe of holome doctrine faileth from them. They promysse the lpyght of the Gospelles doctrine, and wraппe those folkes in darkentes of errours, whom enuetyng darkenesse abydeyth for in hell. For whan with their lyeng woordes they speake of certayn great hygh matters, & with that hope entyce and snare them whiche begynne to amende theyr condicions, they decaue them and wraппe them in the delires of the fleshy & the voluptuous pleasures of this life, promysing that they wil deliuer other fro errour, whā they them selues are occupied in the greatest errors of al, and promysing other men deliuerance from synnes, whan they them selues are the very bonde slaues of filthynges. For of whosoer a mā is overcome, and at whose appoyntement he lyueth, his bonde seruauit he is called by right. For it auayleth the nothing at all to haue ben once frely deliuered fro the bondage of synnes, if they fall to the same state agayn by their own accord: but the bondage is so much the more vile, and so much the more wretched, bicause it is procured without cōstraynt, after the tasyng of libertie. That which was done amysse befoze the Gospel preached, is a great parte long of errour, and long of Ignoraunce. But they whiche hauing once acknowlaged by the preaching of the Gospel, ouercome and sauour Iesu Chryste, haue through Baptisme renounced the filthynges of this world, and professed a pure and an heauenty life: if they be overcome agayn with lustes, and wraппed in theyr olde vncleane, theyr baptisme doeth not only nothing helpe the at al, but also they are in worse state, than they were befoze they knewe Chryste. For his offence is the lesse, that synneth through Ignoraunce. And they shal bee the more greuously damned, whiche haue enlarged the crime of wikednes with the vice of vnthankfulnes. Therefore it had ben better for them to haue not knowen the Gospelles doctrine at al, whiche teacheth Innocencye and purenes, than after they knewe and receyued it, to swaue from the holy commaundment that was once deliuered vnto them. For what other thing is befallen them, than that

which is truly vsed to bee spoken by a commune proverbe

The dogge losseth by agayn that he hath once caste by,
and the washen sowe turneth agayn to walowe her

selve in the myze. It is but a lost labour for the

dogge to haue purged his stomake with

vomite, if he take agayn that he cast

by. And the sowe hath washed

awaye her foule stynking

myze in cleane water

in bayne, if

she, by and by after she is

washen, returne to the

soplinges that she

had gone from.

The. iii. Chapter.

¶ This is the seconde epistle that I now wyte unto you dearly beloved, wherewith I direct your sincere mynde, by putting you in remembrance, that ye may be myndfull of the moyses; which were tolde before of the holy prophetes) and also the commonement of us whiche be Apostles of the Lorde and Saviour. Whys first understande, that there shall come in the laste dayes mockers (in byscapfulnes) which will walke after theprouincialles, and saye: Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers dyed, all thinges continue in the same estate wherein they were at the beginning. For they they knowe not (and that wofully) how that the heauens a greates while ago were, and the earth out of the waters, appeared, by the word of God: by the which thinges the worlde that then was, perished, beinge ouerturned with water. But the heauens and earth which are now, be kept by his word in store, and reserved vnto tyme agaynst the daye of iudgement and perdition of ungodly men.

The text.



Dearely beloved, these matters I beate in with many wordes vnto you, and euen now in these myne other letters I warne you of the self same thing, not that I doubt of the bygghnesse of your mynde, but that you may haue in remembrance more and more the thinge that you know and hold, and do that you do with the more hartly chearefulnes and constant steadfastnes. You shall be in the lesse perill of hurting by their vngacious doctrine, if you remember, that it was spoken of by the holy prophetes in tymes past, whiche gaue warning to beware of this kynde of men. And if you do remember that we gaue the same precept, whiche are the Apostles of the lorde and saviour Iesu Christ, who forbade that no manne should geue eare to such as in steede of the Gospelles teach, bring in pernicious doctrine. This therfore knowe you first of all, that there shall come hereafter, not preachers but mockers, beinge cunningly furnished with sleighthes and subtil deccates, to beguile the ignorant withall; whiche shall not folowe those thinges that Christ taught vs., but like as their life shall be after the lustes of their owne hart, so shall they teache after their owne appetite, those thinges that shalbe fitte for suche a manner of life. For inasmuche as they life is filthy, they shall not be desirous of the lordes coming: And for that cause sake shall they perswade bothe to them selues and others, that he shall not come agayn, and saye: where is the promised resurrection: where is the iudgement: where are the sondye joyes of rewardes according to the desertes of living: whan cometh he that is looked for day by day in vayne: for they shall thinke surely that he shall neuer come, because his coming is put of for a tyme. What token (saye they) is there of the resurrection: Our fathers are dead one after an other, and neuer one hath risen agayn to life yet hitherto. And like as sence the creation of the worlde, all thinges are engendred by the enchaungable courses of the dyeng and of the luyng, euen so vnto this tyme remaineth the same course of nature, where as by mutacion of the worlde that hath ben before, we may gather that there shalbe a newnes hereafter. And like as the mutacion chaunced, what tyme they looked not for it that luyd after they owne filthy lustes, euen so shall the nouacion happen, whether we beleue it, or not beleue it. For this thing they are not ware of, or (as I suppose rather) they dissemble to knowe, that the heauens were created long agoe, and also the earth, which the waters, wherewith it was couered, made bare, a great power of waters also hanging alofte. And whan mankynde was almoste altogether defiled with vices, God beinge offended, sent the flood and destroyed the worlde of that tyme, reseruing only eight persons, which had folowed Innocency.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .ii. Epistle

This vniuersall iudgement God exercised at that tyme, in pouergeing and re-
newing the earth through water. Than the heauens continue yet still as they
were created, and they are referred to fyre, by the whiche they shall also be put-
ged in the daye of iudgement, when the wicked shall be destroyed by fyre, like as
in tynes past they perished by water. Forasmuche than as it is a thing mosse
certain that that daye shall come, it maketh no matter, whether it come later or
sooner: This only standeth vs in hande to prouide for, that when so euer it co-
meth, it fynde not vs vntready. We in our conceytes thinke some thinges long,
a some thinges shorte: but vnto God there is nothing, neyther shorte nor long.
In his promises he foloweth not the appetites of vs, but his owne eternall &
vunchaungeable decreed counsaile, vnto whome nothing is neither past nor to
come, but al thinges are present. But vnto vs what so euer he hath promysed, he
rehibeteth in the tyme that he hath appointed before hande to him self. For elles,
wth him al is one whether there be one daye past or a thousand yeares. Wth the
same faithfull assurednes doeth he performe the thing whiche he performeth the
later, than he doeth the thyrng he doeth more speedilyer. For as concernyng him
selfe, he hath performed euen vnto the thing, that he hath purposed to per-
forme. For he dooeth not chaunge his purpose and after the maner of Delayers
prologue and put of his promys as some falsly iudge of him, measuring God
after their owne condicions: but he prescribeth the space to be longer, somtymes
for our sake, because vpon his tendre mercye and gentlenes he woude haue
none so perishe, but is desirous to haue all men once to repent, that those whiche
perishe, haue no cause to fynde fault that they wanted space to chaunge their
life in to better. And that daye shall come vnloked for, and shall come cerryng
vpon men, none otherwile, than a thefe in the night cometh vpon them that are
a sleape. In that daye there shall be so greate violence of fyre, that the heauens
shall passe with a nightie greate force in to an other kinde: But the elementes,
wher vpon this lower world consisteth, shall be dissolued with heate: and finally
the earth, and the thinges therein conteyned, shall be burned with fyre, and all
the whole nature of thinges shall be cleane purged. And if it bee of necessitie,
that all thinges shall be so pure, that these thinges shall also be dissolued, whiche
offende not: howe muche standeth it vs in hande diligently to endeuour, that
that daye maye fynde vs thoroughly purged and vpright in all holynes of life,
and in all studious assayes of godlynnes. In the meane season this muste bee
with muche speedynes foreraste, that you be alwaye in a readynes, when so euer
that daye shall come, whole straight iudgement no manne shall be able
to scape: whiche shall suffre no thyrng to be impure, so muche, that
the heauens must be dissolued with fyre, and the elementes con-
strayned to melt with heate. And after this, we loke, accord-
yng to hys promysse, for new heauens and a newe
earthe, that haue no corruption, no fault: that
we, in whome shall be no corrupt mynde,
maye haue the fruition of
them being vncorrupt.

O dearly beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, howe that our daye is with the Lord, as a thousande yeare, and a thousande yeare as our daye. The Lord hath promised is not lache, as some men count laches: but is patient to be warned: for as much as he woulde haue no man lost: but wyl receaue all men to repentance. Nevertheless the daye of the Lord wyl come as a theefe in the night, in the whiche daye the heauens shall passe awaye in maner of a tempeste, and the elementes shall melte with heate, the earth also and the bowches that are therein shall burne. Seeing then that all these thinges shall perishe, what maner persons ought ye to be in holy conuersacion and godlines: looking for and passing vnto the cominge of the daye of God, by whome the heauens shall perishe with fyre, and the elementes shall melt with heate. Nevertheless, we (accordinge to his promes) loke for a newe heauen and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righte iustice. Wherefore dearly beloved, seeing that ye loke for suche thinges, be diligent that ye maye be founde of him in peace, without spatter and blemish. And suppose that the longe sufferinge of the Lord is saluacion, euen as our dearly beloved brother Paule also (accordinge to the wylsome gentis vnto him) hath wrytten vnto you, yea, almost in euery epistle, speakinge of suche thinges: amonge whiche are many thinges harde to be vnderstande, whiche they that are vnteached, and vnstable, peruerce, as they do also the other scriptures vnto their owne destruction. Ye therfore beloved (seeing ye be warned afore hande) beware, lest ye (with other men) be also plucked a waie throughe the errorre of the wycked, and fall from your owne steadfastnes. Our growe in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and sauiour Iesus Christ. To whome be glorie bothe now and for euer. Amen.

Wherefore most dearly beloved brethren, haue this so fearfull a iudgement alwayes before your eyes, and geue diligence, that whan the lord cometh, he maye fynde you pure and vblamable, not onely before menne, whose iudgements are many tymes deceaued, but also before hi. For he is pure in dede, that is pure in the iudgement of God. And althoughe peraduenture it be long ere that daye come, construe it not so, as thought he woulde not come at all, but conspoyr that this tender sufferance of the lord, wherewith he geueth all men space to repent, doeth care for metynes saluacion: of whiche matters our mooste deare brother and folowe in office, Paule wrote vnto you, so muche the more habundantly, as God gaue him the more plenteous gyfte of wysedome: and in almost all his epistles exhorteth you to loke for this daye, sometime speakinge after suche a sorte, as though the daye of the lord were already now at hande: that he might the rather pycke you forwarde to the studye of godlynes, where as that daye (because it is vncertaine) oughte to be looked for, so as though he woulde come this daye, but yet after suche wyse, that no man prescribe a tyme certaine. These and some other matters Paule accordinge to his high wisdom, myngled in his Epistles. And wheras he spake them most rightly that coulde be, yet the ignorant and inconstaunt persons wrest them with a peruerse interpretation, as they doe the other scriptures, to their owne destruction, that the thing whiche is healthe vnto the good, maye be turned, throughe their owne faulce, in to venome vnto them. Therfore brethren, sence you are so many waies warned before hande bothe of me and of Paule, take hede, that you be not deceyued, as other are, with the fraude of abominable men, and fall awaye from your substantiall steadfastnes, whiche you haue expessed yet hitherto: but rather geue diligence, that you maye continually encrease and goe forwarde in the gistes and knowledge of our lord and sauiour Iesu Christ, vnto whome be glorie bothe now in this lyfe, and for euer worlde without ende. Amen.

Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon
the seconde Epistle of the
posible S. Peter.